

MEMORANDUM

TO: Everett Planning Commission
FROM: Rebecca McCrary, Long Range Planning Manager
DATE: June 1, 2023
MEETING DATE: June 6, 2023
SUBJECT: Everett 2044: Middle Housing

INTRODUCTION

At the June 6 meeting, staff will continue the briefing and discussion from the May 16 meeting. Note: the background section below is unchanged from the May 16 version of the memo.

BACKGROUND

Middle housing refers to housing types that contain more than one dwelling unit within a structure or a lot but that are smaller than mid-rise apartment buildings. Middle housing types are common in neighborhoods throughout Everett and represent up to 24% of the existing homes in the city¹. Development of middle housing types in the city were largely prohibited beginning with the 1954 zoning code.



See the Department of Commerce's [Planning for Middle Housing](#) webpage for more background

Rethink Housing Action Plan

The [Rethink Housing Action Plan](#) calls for the city to update its comprehensive plan and adjust its zoning code to facilitate greater housing diversity and production, including in areas that have been mostly limited to detached houses (recommendations 1.2, 1.5). The action plan also calls for the city to address site design requirements, design guidelines, and streetscape improvements to provide compatibility between new development and existing neighborhoods (recommendations 1.3, 1.4).

¹ Source: American Community Survey [table B25024](#), 2017-21 estimate - 2-9 unit and 1 unit attached structures



Middle Housing Grant Work Program

Everett secured a state grant in 2022 to support implementation of Rethink Housing recommendations. The grant work plan includes the following deliverables, due to the Dept. of Commerce June 30, 2023:

- Middle housing plan, policy, and regulatory gap analysis, and updates to the city's [2013 Infill Measures Report](#)
- Racial equity and displacement analysis, including potential anti-displacement policies
- Middle housing outreach and engagement report
- Draft middle housing-related staff report with comprehensive plan amendments, development regulation ordinance sections to implement middle housing reforms

2023 State Legislature – [HB 1110](#)

The state legislature passed HB 1110 in the 2023 session, requiring larger cities including Everett to permit development of middle housing types throughout the city. The following summarizes how the bill affects Everett:

- Defines middle housing (p. 5, lines 32-36)
- Everett must allow the development of at least four units per lot on all lots zoned predominantly for residential use and at least six units per lot within ¼ mile walk of BRT/rail or if at least two of the units are affordable housing for 50 years. (p. 9)
- Alternate route: 25% of lots dedicated to detached (single-family) housing may remain reserved for detached housing. (pp. 10-11)
 - 25% must include:
 - Lots with critical area buffers
 - Areas with certified risk of displacement
 - 25% may not include:
 - Areas within ½ mile walking distance of BRT/rail
 - Areas for which the exclusion would further racially disparate impacts or discrimination
 - Areas historically covered by a covenant or deed restriction excluding racial minorities
- Everett may not require standards for middle housing that are more restrictive than for detached housing (p. 12)
- Everett may not require off-street parking that exceeds the following, per unit (p. 12)
 - Zero for middle housing within ½ mile walking distance of BRT/rail
 - One for middle housing on lots smaller than 6,000 square feet
 - Two for middle housing on lots larger than 6,000 square feet

Everett 2044 Comprehensive Plan Update - Dispersed Growth Alternative

The city continues to work on the periodic update to its comprehensive plan, with a focus lately on defining growth alternatives to study in the environmental review process. The dispersed growth alternative largely represents a middle housing alternative, which will incorporate work done through the middle housing grant work program as well as requirements of HB 1110.

REQUEST OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION

Review the information in this memo and prepare questions or points of discussion for the June 6 and June 20 meetings. Between the two meetings, staff hope to receive enough feedback to support finalizing the middle housing grant deliverables and the definition of the Dispersed Growth Alternative.

